



Springfield-Greene County  
Health Department  
*Helping people live longer, healthier, happier lives*

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***From the Office of the Director of Health***

### **New Vaccine Protects Greene County Women**

The Springfield-Greene County Health Department now offers a new vaccine to help protect girls and women against cervical cancer and other diseases caused by human papilloma virus (HPV).

"We are pleased to be able to offer the Gardasil vaccine to females in Greene County," says Administrator of Community Health and Epidemiology, Kendra Williams. "HPV is the most common sexually-transmitted disease in the United States, affecting more than half of all sexually active women at some point in their lives. This vaccine is an important step in the fight against illnesses caused by HPV."

The vaccine is approved for use in females 9-26 years of age, and is designed to protect against HPV types 16 and 18, which are responsible for an estimated 70% of cervical cancer cases, and HPV types 6 and 11, which account for an estimated 90% of genital warts cases.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimate that about 6.2 million Americans become infected with genital HPV each year. Most women's bodies clear the virus, without encountering health problems, but some women develop genital warts or abnormal cells on the cervix lining that may later turn into cancer.

"While the vaccine is one method of protection against cervical cancer and genital warts," adds Williams, "it does not protect against all types of HPV. We urge females to continue to visit their health care provider for regular Pap tests to screen for HPV and cervical cancers."

Appointments to receive the vaccine can be made by calling the Springfield-Greene County Health Department's Westside Public Health Center at (417) 874-1220. The vaccine will be administered in a three-dose series over a period of six months. Each dose costs \$135.00, and will be covered by Medicaid.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the Gardasil vaccine on June 8, 2006.

**Media inquiries, contact:**

Jaci McReynolds, Public Health Information Specialist (417) 874-1205 \* (417) 830-9511 cell  
Kendra Williams, Administrator of Community Health and Epidemiology (417) 864-1408

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